

"My name is
Christian,
my surname
is Catholic."
— ST. PACIAN

INTERDVM

"Increase
our faith."
— LUKE 17:5

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THE ROBBER CHURCH

(Part 1)

Pi And Vatican II

Ludicrous as it sounds, the following story is nevertheless true. Once upon a time an attempt was made to set legally the value of π . As every schoolboy knows, π (pi) is a fixed constant—a "constant of nature," so to speak—, being the ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. The approximate value of π , carried out to seven decimal places, is 3.1415927. We say "approximate," for the exact value of π cannot be determined. Consequently for the purpose of calculation some approximation of π must be used, such as 22/7, or 3.14, or 3.1416, etc. Given any circle at all, therefore, we can compute its approximate circumference by multiplying π times its diameter, using for π the value 3.1416 (for example); the formula is: $c = \pi \times d$.

In the year 1897, Representative T. I. Record of Posey County, Indiana, introduced into the legislature of that great and sovereign State his famous House Bill #246. This bill provided that the value of π would be set legally to 4, or else 3.2, or some other nice number, easier to work with. Although using the value 4 for π might make some arithmetic computations a little easier, the answers to all mathematical problems involving π would be quite wrong, although "legally" correct. Undaunted by such considerations, Mr. Record claimed in his bill that "since the rule in present use fails to work ..., it should be discarded as wholly wanting and misleading in the practical applications." (!!)

Although it was initially referred, for some mysterious reason, to the House Committee on Swamp Lands, the bill eventually reached the Committee on Education. That committee, after studying the bill, reported it back to the House with a recommendation that it be passed. And, indeed, House Bill #246 did pass when voted upon by the House of Representatives of Indiana, unanimously to boot, 67-0. Next the bill was sent to the Senate, and although it got by the first reading there with flying colors, on the second reading the Senate threw it out. Thus was finally scuttled this landmark innovation which was designed to give relief to the citizens of Indiana from that older established rule which "fails to work" and is "wholly wanting."

What reminded me of this story was my recent reflection upon the achievements of Vatican II. However, Vatican II succeeded where Rep. Record's bill had failed, for both attempted substantially the same thing. Some subversive delegates at the Council introduced a brand new quantity and the whole Council voted upon this new quantity and approved it. But one and all then pretended that it was the same quantity as before, and they continued to call it by the same old name as before, namely, the "Catholic Church." The fact is that this brand new quantity, their new Ecumenical Church, is in no sense the same as the true Catholic Church any more than π is the same as 4.

Is It The Same Church?

The French have a paradoxical saying: "The more it changes, the more it stays the same." This, of course, is not true in most real-life situations. An ashtray full of cigar ashes is not a cigar. And a church that has been demolished to rubble or converted into a dining hall is no longer a church. Let no one delude himself any longer. That ecumenical organization out there with its lying propaganda organs all over the world, called euphemistically the "diocesan press" or the "Catholic press", or the "Vatican Guidelines" for this and that; that new Church with its cardinals and bishops dedicated to "interfaith," and with its faithless priests who think of themselves as nothing more than "presiders of the assembly" or "ministers of the word," and with its craven and bamboozled "People of God" robbed of their birthright: -- all that is simply not the true Catholic Church. No, that ecumenical nightmare, mired in chaos, is Satan's own Ark of Perdition. Just as Pope St. Leo I rightfully referred to a certain bogus "ecumenical council" as the Robber Council (Laticinium), so likewise what now confronts us is nothing more nor less than a Robber Church.

For just how much "change" could the Catholic Church possibly undergo and still be the Church? Quite apparent for all to see are the frenzied efforts of the new robbers to destroy all ties and links with the past, to eradicate from memory all vestiges of the ancient, true, traditional Church. To think of the new Robber Church as the very same Catholic Church that it is so deliberately and painstakingly trying to wipe out of memory? Absurdity of absurdities! What are some of the characteristics of the Robber Church? We can enumerate the following: it has abandoned most of the important laws, disciplines and practices of the true Church; it has new "Scriptures" which are re-written falsifications of Holy Scripture; it scorns the true Catholic Tradition; it despises the venerable customs of the Catholic Church; its new "prayers" are alterations of the old Catholic prayers, tailored to harmonize with the heresies of the new Robber Church; it ignores and discourages the many pious practices and devotions which the true Catholic Church had always encouraged; it has a liturgy, sacramental rites and a "New Mass," all devoid of everything that is true, good and beautiful in the liturgy, rites and Holy Sacrifice of the Catholic Church; it is not too fond of Saints, and it shows this by disowning some of them, "downgrading" some of them, and seeing to it that many others will soon be forgotten.

Let us continue. The Robber Church has perverse doctrines, innovations which are opposed to true Catholic doctrine; its "People of God" imbibe these doctrines in the sermons they hear and in the "Catholic" literature they read; the children's new "catechisms" are filled with the same insidious doctrines, suggestions and theories, all poisonous and all geared to insure that they will mature into good rebellious "robbers"; the new morality with its "updated" views about "sin" is a denial of the Catholic Church's code of morality; and, lastly, the very structure itself of the new Church is not held to be monarchical like the Catholic Church, but rather "collegial" and democratic.

Now, if the teachings and doctrines, the laws and disciplines, the moral code, the practices, prayers, liturgy, the Mass itself, and, yes, even the structure -- if all these are different, then in what respect, pray tell, is this new church the same as the Catholic Church?

You may claim that no essential has really changed, that the "essence" of the Church still remains. You may argue that none of the doctrines of belief or teachings on morality are really different from what they were before. But this is only wishful thinking on your part, because the doctrines proposed for belief and the morality encouraged to be practiced are not the same. It is agreed that the Church can change laws, disciplines and practices (some of them) without losing Her identity, for the Church has the power and the right to alter merely human institutions. (Of course, never has the Church throughout Her long history altered them wantonly and on a wholesale basis, for this would be madness!) But that is not the issue; the point is that the changes go beyond laws, disciplines, etc.; the "beliefs" and moral standards of the Robber Church are new and different.

In order to prove this last statement it suffices to provide just one example. Because if even one essential teaching -- i.e., on a matter of revealed faith or on a matter related to and necessary to safeguard faith -- which the Catholic Church has held is rejected, then the rejectors can in no way be said to represent the true Church. The following sources uphold this assertion:

(1) "To refuse to believe any one of them is equivalent to rejecting them all" (Pope Leo XIII, encyclical Sapientiae Christianae).

(2) "Such is the nature of Catholicism that it does not admit of more or less, but must be held as a whole or as a whole rejected: 'This is the Catholic faith, which unless a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved' (Athanasian Creed). There is no need of adding any qualifying terms to the profession of Catholicism: it is quite enough for each one to proclaim 'Christian is my name and Catholic my surname,' only let him endeavor to be in reality what he calls himself" (Pope Benedict XV, encyclical Ad Beatissimi).

(3) "It was thus the duty of all who heard Jesus Christ, if they wished for eternal salvation, not merely to accept His doctrine as a whole, but to assent with their entire mind to each and every point of it, since it is unlawful to withhold faith from God even in regard to one single point. ... And, therefore, it was no more allowable to repudiate one iota of the apostles' teaching than it was to reject any point of the doctrine of Christ Himself" (Pope Leo XIII, encyclical Satis Cognitum).

(4) "Every assertion contrary to the truth of revealed faith is altogether false, for the reason that it contradicts, however slightly, the truth" (Fifth Lateran Council, bull Apostolici regiminis).

New Doctrine on "Ecumenism"

Here, then, is an example of a reversal of doctrine. In Vatican II's "Decree on Ecumenism" we read the following: "Most valuable for this purpose are meetings of the two sides -- especially for discussion of theological problems -- where each can treat with the other on an

EQUAL FOOTING..."(emphasis added). This teaching of Vatican II refers to so-called "ecumenical dialogue" between Catholics and non-Catholics. The following three points are contained in it: (1) there should be meetings, assemblies, etc., between Catholics and non-Catholics; (2) at the meetings the Catholics not only can, but should, deal with the non-Catholics on an equal footing; (3) this "equal footing" is to be observed, and it says this very explicitly, in discussions on theology.

First of all, regarding point (1), should there even be such meetings? Concerning similar efforts in a past era, Pope Pius XI taught the following: "With this object congresses, meetings, and addresses are arranged, ... where all without distinction ... are invited to join in the discussion. Now, such efforts can meet with no kind of approval among Catholics. They presuppose the erroneous view that all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy ... Those who hold such a view not only are in error; they distort the true idea of religion, and thus reject it, falling gradually into naturalism and atheism. To favour this opinion, therefore, and to encourage such undertakings is tantamount to abandoning the religion revealed by God" (encyclical Mortalium Animos; emphasis added). Not only the passage of the "Decree on Ecumenism" we quoted above, but the decree itself, throughout and in its entirety, does indeed quite clearly "presuppose the erroneous view that all religions are more or less good and praiseworthy." Numerous passages could be cited to show this. For example: "Moreover, some and even very many of the significant elements and endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church itself, can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church..."; the liturgical actions of non-Catholics "must be regarded as capable of giving access to the community of salvation"; "For the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them (separated Churches and Communities) as a means of salvation..."(!); they have "truly Christian endowments"; etc., etc. If the separated Churches allegedly have very many significant elements and endowments, etc.; if they allegedly are capable of giving access to the community of salvation; if they are even a "means of salvation" (allegedly); then it must be conceded that they are at least "more or less good and praiseworthy." This notion--and it is the whole animus of the Decree on Ecumenism from start to finish--is in the words of Pius XI "erroneous," "distorts the true idea of religion," and it "is tantamount to abandoning the religion revealed by God."

Regarding points (2) and (3), namely, theological discussions on an equal footing, this teaching of Vatican II is intrinsically wrong. It is a crime against truth, it is contrary to reason, and it is a betrayal of Christ to allow His Church and His teachings to be placed on any sort of "equal footing" with error, heresy, and infidelity. Pope Leo XIII affirms that "it is contrary to reason that error and truth should have equal rights" (encyclical Libertas Praestantissimum). Moreover, the doctrine advanced by the Decree on Ecumenism is Naturalistic and Masonic, for as the same Pope Leo says: "It is held (by the Freemasons and the Naturalists)... that in the various forms of religion there is no reason why one should have precedence of another; and that they are all to occupy the same place"; and again, "(The Freemasons) thereby teach the great error of this age... that all religions are alike. This manner of reasoning is calculated to bring about the ruin of all forms of religion, and especially of the Catholic religion, which, as it is the only one that is true, cannot, without great injustice, be regarded as merely equal to the other religions" (encyclical Humanum Genus). Equal footing??

Needless to say, the non-Catholics have no objection to "equal footing," for "they assert their readiness to treat with the Church of Rome, but on equal terms, as equals with an equal. But even if they could so treat, there seems little doubt that they would do so only on condition that no pact into which they might enter should compel them to retract those opinions which still keep them outside the one fold of Christ" (Mortalium Animos). Continuing, Pope Pius XI now explains the essential nature of this teaching expounded throughout Mortalium Animos: "This being so, it is clear that the Apostolic See can by no means take part in these assemblies, nor is it in any way lawful for Catholics to give such enterprises their encouragement or support. If they did so, they would be giving countenance to a false Christianity quite alien to the one Church of Christ. Shall we commit the iniquity of suffering the truth, the truth revealed by God, to be made a subject for compromise? FOR IT IS INDEED A QUESTION OF DEFENDING REVEALED TRUTH" (emphasis added). This new teaching of Vatican II, therefore, is the exact reversal of an essential teaching of the Catholic Church which is related to revealed faith, for the teachings of Leo XIII and Pius XI, following what the Church had always held, are absolutely necessary for the safeguarding of faith. The Robber Church is not the Catholic Church.

Not only do they subvert doctrine, but in doing so they even employ the exact phraseology, verbatim, which the Church has condemned. Compare their words "equal footing" with the following teaching of Leo XIII: "The Church, indeed, deems it unlawful to place the various forms of divine worship on the same footing as the true religion" (encyclical Immortale Dei).

New Morality of "Ecumenism"

Next let us consider, using the Decree on Ecumenism as an example, how the new Ecumenical Church has reversed the teachings on morals of the true Catholic Church. According to Canon

Law (c. 1258), worship in common with non-Catholics in any "active" manner is strictly and simply forbidden under pain of mortal sin. Such worship in common is called "communicatio in sacris." Every priest was taught, and it was drilled into his ears during his seminary days, that communicatio in sacris is absolutely forbidden, no "ifs, ands and buts," under pain of mortal sin; and all Catholics were aware, or certainly should have been aware, of this teaching. To understand fully and clearly the teaching on communicatio in sacris it is necessary to grasp the distinction between active and passive cooperation in non-Catholic worship.

Merely material presence, or passive cooperation, is (under Canon Law 1258, par. 2) only tolerated, and it is tolerated provided that (1) there is a grave reason for being physically present at a non-Catholic service; (2) in cases of doubt whether such gravity exists the bishop must give his approval; and (3) by being present at a non-Catholic service there is no danger that the Catholic will give scandal or that his own faith will be perverted. Considering these aforesaid stipulations, it is clear that the mind of the Church is to discourage even passive cooperation. As regards passive cooperation, moreover, in order to fulfill the necessary conditions for it a person may not join in any positive act of worship whatsoever and he must abstain from any positive action. It is evident that even "passive" cooperation very well might be a danger to some Catholics. "Canon Law," a text by Bouscaren and Ellis (one of the best commentaries on Canon Law available), says on p. 704: "It is conceivable that even merely passive presence might be accompanied by an internal intention to approve, assent to, or encourage the non-Catholic worship; if that were true it would be formal cooperation in an evil act, and forbidden by the natural law" (emphasis added).

If, besides being physically present, a Catholic placed any positive act of worship whatsoever in common with the non-Catholics, such an act would be active cooperation. This is the meaning of "communicatio in sacris." Communicatio in sacris is mortally sinful because it is "formal cooperation in an evil act and forbidden by the natural law." Consider the currently widespread so-called "interfaith" activities, visiting Protestant churches and Jewish synagogues, exchanging ministers, etc. To claim that these activities fall under "passive cooperation" would be an outright lie. Least of all is there a "grave reason" for them, least of all is there "no danger of perversion or of scandal." Verily the only one of the three conditions required by canon law that is literally fulfilled is that often the bishop approves of them!

Here is a good example. The 'Parish News Report' of St. Aloysius Church in Palo Alto, California (Jan. 1971) reads: "In honor of the Church Unity Octave the Mass (on Jan. 24th) will have an ecumenical emphasis. Our neighbors across the street from Wesley Methodist Church have been invited to attend and their minister, Rev. Bob Schlager, will participate in the service by saying a few words before the end of the Mass. On the following Sunday, January 31st, our parish community has been invited to join in the 11:00 A.M. service at Wesley Methodist. Father McGuinness will address the congregation during the service." Does this sound like "passive" cooperation? "To join in the 11:00 A.M. service at Wesley Methodist"? When a Catholic priest "addresses" a Protestant congregation "during the service," is it merely "passive"? This example, which is in my local area, is multiplied every week and everywhere. All such "ecumenical" and "interfaith" activities are active participation, they fall under communicatio in sacris, and they are mortally sinful, being the formal cooperation in an evil act and forbidden by the natural law.

All of this is not only permitted but encouraged by Vatican II. In the Decree on Ecumenism we read: "Yet worship in common [communicatio in sacris is the exact phraseology used here in the Latin text of this decree!] is not to be considered as a means to be used indiscriminately for the restoration of Christian unity. There are two main principles governing the practice of such common worship (communicatio in sacris): first, the bearing witness to the unity of the Church, and second, the sharing in the means of grace." Elsewhere in this same decree, referring specifically to the Orthodox schismatic communities, Vatican II urges: "Therefore some worship in common (communicatio in sacris), given suitable circumstances and the approval of the Church authority [the Robber Church, that is], is not only possible but to be encouraged."

How does one "bear witness to the unity of the Church" -- that is, the unity of the Catholic Church -- by worshipping at a non-Catholic service? How does one "share in the means of grace" by participating in an assembly that rejects all the ordinary channels of grace given us by Christ? How does a Catholic "share in the means of grace" by committing an act forbidden by the natural law; i.e., formal cooperation in an evil act? How, in fine, does one "share in the means of grace" by committing a mortal sin? "For we are bound absolutely," says Pope Leo XIII, "to worship God in that way which He has shown to be His will" (Immortale Dei).

There it is. Do not try to tell us that nothing essential has changed, that the "essence" of the Catholic Church remains in the Robber Church. Do not say that the precepts of morality, the definitions of what is a sin and what is not a sin, have not been changed. The new doctrines proposed for belief and the new "code of morality" openly conflict with those of the true Catholic Church. The new Ecumenical Church is to the true Catholic Church as 4 is to 1.

Some Elementary Logic

One fundamental premise we must accept is that the Catholic Church absolutely cannot be guilty, ever, of self-contradiction in regard to any teaching on faith or morals, or on any of its teachings so related to faith or morals that it is necessary for the safeguarding of them. One clear fact is that the Decree on Ecumenism -- which is only one of many possible examples that could be cited -- subverts, or overthrows, the teachings of the Catholic Church. Therefore, the conclusion that one must draw is that Vatican II and the whole new Ecumenical Church it unveiled are in no way part of or identical with the true Catholic Church. Somehow, nevertheless, we are expected to accept it as a matter of fact that the Holy Ghost was there watching over the deliberations and decisions of Vatican II. The very same Holy Ghost Who has always guided and enlightened and sanctified His Church? The same Holy Ghost Who directed His earlier Sovereign Pontiffs -- e.g., Leo XIII, Pius XI, etc. -- to teach and proclaim precisely the contrary to what Vatican II teaches and proclaims?? Tell us, does the Holy Ghost change His mind?

God permitted Vatican II, nothing more! To aver that the Holy Ghost guided its decisions would be as blasphemous as to aver that He guided and inspired the Protestant Revolt. The Author of Truth cannot author nor inspire deceit, confusion, and least of all, He cannot assist in mapping out the actual program for the destruction of His Holy Church! These are the fruits of Vatican II.

Many loyal and true Catholics find a dilemma in Vatican II. It is like an ugly duckling, or an incorrigible, disobedient child. In all their sincerity and with all their studious efforts they cannot reconcile its teachings with the true teachings they have always known; but, because they honestly think that "somehow" or "in some way" Vatican II was the work of the Holy Ghost, they try to accept its teachings, or, if worst comes to worst, ignore them, but they do not see how they can reject them outright. Just precisely how Vatican II squares with orthodox Catholicism they cannot fathom; it is a "mystery" for them, but they accept the theory that it does square with it.

The Council of Basle (1431-1449) has long been regarded as something of an enigma (see, for example, the Catholic Encyclopedia, v. 2, p.334). Whether or not it is to be considered as a general, or ecumenical, council "has been often warmly discussed" (Cath. Encyc., loc. cit.). Some reckon the entire council, from beginning to end, as genuine. Some hold that it was a true ecumenical council up until the Bull of Pope Eugene IV appeared, transferring it to Ferrara (Sept. 18, 1437). And some others reject it altogether and claim that in no sense was it, or any part of it, a true ecumenical council. Among these latter we may include St. Robert Bellarmine. He rejected the Council of Basle, whole and entire, because (among other reasons) of the "subsequent rebellious attitude" of the Council Fathers in face of the papal decrees attempting to close the Council. Because of this subsequent rebellion (a visible fruit of the attitude of the Council Fathers), St. Robert applied a principle of retroaction and deemed null and void the status of Basle as a true general council. This is not the opinion of an "amateur theologian"; it will be recalled that upon St. Robert Bellarmine the Church has bestowed the rare honor associated with the title "Doctor of the Church."

As mentioned earlier, there are many true and loyal Catholics who are looking for a way out -- an honest and orthodox way out, consonant with the teaching of the Church --, but, try as they may, they are unable to find any so-called "legitimate grounds" for rejecting Vatican II. Hence they try to "live with" the doctrine of Vatican II, becoming more confused and almost schizophrenic day by day. Really there should be no problem about this. Following the spirit of St. Robert Bellarmine and applying similar principles, one should reject Vatican II for the plain and simple reason that it erred. This is wholly consonant with the teaching of the Church. Either Vatican II erred or the Catholic Church prior to 1962 erred. The rebellion at Vatican II was not merely "subsequent," because this rebellion of the instigators and founders of the Robber Church was present from the day the Council opened. However, there has been plenty of subsequent rebellion in the entire flock, from the highest to the lowest, which is, as it were, circumstantial evidence. We have Christ's own word for it that a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, nor an evil tree good fruit. By its fruits is Vatican II known.

Studied Defiance

Seemingly the Robber Church has a carefully thought out plan, or a studied effort, to do the following. (1) Introduce just precisely those very practices that have already been explicitly condemned or rejected by the Church in the past. (2) Offer the very same specious arguments and pretexts for innovations that have already in the past been refuted by the Church, and which She has exposed and rejected as rash, false, subversive, etc. (3) Change those very things that have always been held to be absolutely unchangeable (e.g., the Canon of the Mass -- the word 'canon' comes from the Greek word meaning a rigid rod or rule; hence something firm and unchangeable). (4) Teach identically the same erroneous and poisonous doctrines that the Church has repeatedly condemned as actual heresy, or bordering on heresy, or favorable to the heretics, etc.

Adequately illustrating this studied defiance is the use by the Decree on Ecumenism of the phraseology "equal footing," which flouts to the letter the teaching of Pope Leo XIII which declares unlawful the placing of non-Catholic sects "on the same footing" as the true Church. In explaining a practice strictly forbidden under pain of mortal sin Canon Law uses the phrase communicatio in sacris. And "communicatio in sacris" is the precise wording used by Vatican II in describing the worship in common with non-Catholics that is "to be encouraged." Similarly, the words "for all men" were expressly singled out by the Roman Catechism as a forbidden substitute for the words "for many" in the form for the Consecration of the Precious Blood. Yes, the Robber Church makes it a point to violate not only the spirit of the law, but, indeed, whenever and wherever possible its very letter! The following illustration of this penchant is particularly striking.

"The Southern Cross" (the official newspaper which is "sponsored by the South African Catholic Hierarchy," to quote the credentials it claims), in its issue of July 9, 1969, carried an article under the full-width banner headline: "Anglican islanders may share Catholic Eucharist". Dated Suva, Fiji, the article reads as follows: "In the Fiji and Gilbert Islands, permission has been granted for Anglicans to receive Communion in Catholic churches, in accord with the 1967 Directory on Ecumenism issued by the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. The conditions for this are that the non-Catholic asks spontaneously for Communion, that he expresses a faith in the Eucharist in accord with the Roman Church, and that his own minister is unavailable for long periods." Note well that of the three conditions prescribed, the only theological one (sandwiched in between two "smokescreen" conditions) is "that he expresses faith in the Eucharist..." Nothing is said about the Anglicans' accepting whole and entire the Catholic Faith. Nothing is said about requiring that the Anglicans be in the state of grace before receiving "Communion." No, not a word about the necessity of the proper state of the soul of the recipient, sacramental confession, etc. (as if the Robber Church would ask Anglicans to go to confession!).

Now, I say that if someone were on the lookout for an easy and quick way to incur ipso facto excommunication from the Catholic Church, he could not do better than the "Church" in the Fiji and Gilbert Islands has done. All the members of its hierarchy, clergy, and laity who knowingly and willingly even so much as subscribe to or agree with the aforementioned ruling concerning Anglicans are, in very truth, excommunicated. The holy Council of Trent, in its session 13, prescribed the following solemn condemnation:

"Canon 11. If anyone says that faith alone is sufficient preparation for receiving the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist : let him be anathema. And lest so great a sacrament be received unworthily, and therefore unto death and condemnation, this holy Council ordains and declares that sacramental confession, when a confessor can be had, must necessarily be made beforehand by those whose conscience is burdened with mortal sin, however contrite they may consider themselves. Moreover, if anyone shall presume to teach, preach, or obstinately assert the contrary, or in public disputation shall even presume to defend the contrary, by that fact itself he is excommunicated" (emphasis added).

Where can anyone find stronger terms, or more explicit ones, than those embodied in this solemn anathema? It asks no questions; it does not concern itself whether or not someone asks "spontaneously" for the Holy Eucharist; scarcely does it worry whether or not some heretical minister is "unavailable for long periods" for his erring followers. On the contrary, with the full weight of an infallible general council it declares that if anyone even presumes to defend the thesis that faith alone is sufficient preparation for receiving the Holy Eucharist, - then such a person is ipso facto, on the spot, excommunicated from the Mystical Body of Christ.

Do you wish to dispute the above claim that the "Church" in the Fiji and Gilbert Islands, virtually in toto, is at present excommunicated? Very well, then, but -- mark this well! -- you will be treading on perilous ground. For if, in your disputation, you somehow, in some way, end up defending the position that "faith alone is sufficient....," you will yourself fall under the selfsame ban of excommunication.

Returning to "Primitive Practices"

In his book, "The Council in Action," Hans Küng argues for the necessity "to go back to the very oldest of the Church's traditions" in reforming the liturgy, and he talks about modeling the new "reformed" liturgy along the lines of the "earliest Roman Rite." These clichés about returning to "primitive rites" and "primitive customs," and restoring the Church to its "pristine purity," etc., are obviously quite useful to the Robber Church, for they parrot and repeat them incessantly. These particular clichés have distinct advantages for the Innovators. In the first place, these "primitive customs" are necessarily cloaked in a degree of obscurity. That is to say, only the "very learned" and those on the "inside" know all about them. The average man has no way to check whether such "primitive customs" are authentic or prefabricated. Furthermore, this line of argument surely sounds plausible, doesn't it? If nothing else, it

surely should satisfy the needs of the traditionalist -- this "pristine, primitive" business -- shouldn't it?

This gimmick serves as a soporific. The simpletons sleepily nod their approval while the gangsters go about deftly mangling and mutilating the liturgy. In truth the only thing "primitive" about the whole business lies in the fact that the use of this particular pretext is a very primitive custom among heretics! In the 16th century, Cranmer and his accomplices employed this very same pretext in order to sell the idea of the new "Church of England" to the simple folk. Needless to say, -- and this illustrates our point once again -- the Church has already long ago refuted and exposed this artifice. Referring to the 16th-century Cranmerites, Pope Leo XIII had this to say: "They knew only too well the intimate bond which unites faith with worship, 'the law of belief with the law of prayer', and so, under the pretext of restoring it to its primitive form, they corrupted the order of the liturgy in many ways, to adapt it to the errors of the Innovators" (bull Apostolicae Curae).

Likewise the Synod of Pistoia (an 18th-century council of Jansenists and sympathizers, the decrees of which were condemned by Pius VI) made abundant use of such phrases as: "clinging to ancient rules," "in accordance with ancient customs," "it would be against apostolic practice" to do such and such, "happy days of the early Church," etc. It is almost axiomatic: whenever organized subversives plan to lay their vile hands on the Sacred Liturgy, you can count on them to haul out beforehand this old cliché about "primitive rites and customs," and polish it up in all its pristine purity.

Not only did Pope Leo XIII expose this cliché (in Apostolicae Curae, as quoted above), but also, more recently, Pope Pius XII in his encyclical Mediator Dei condemned liturgical archaism, that is, "the mania for restoring primitive usages in the liturgy." "The desire," he adds, "to restore everything indiscriminately to its ancient condition is neither wise nor praiseworthy."

Frequently the clichés of the Robber Church come in pairs, one member of the pair exactly contradicting the other. Thus the cliché about "primitive practices" has its counterpart (its contradiction) in the one that jabbars about "updating," "aggiornamento," "adjusting the Church to the modern world," "streamlining," etc. How in the world can one constantly "update" and "adjust the Church to the modern world" at the very same time that he is hellbent upon returning to the primitive? But enough! One should not expect to find consistent speech from liars.

In its 'General Instructions' accompanying its "New Order of the Mass," the Robber Church specifies that it will now use red vestments on Passion Sunday and on Good Friday (see #308b). The now-famous "Commentary on the New Order," written by a group of erudite Roman theologians, refers to this as "an unthinkable innovation, which can only be disastrous psychologically ... (Good Friday) thus becomes as the commemoration of any martyr, instead of the Church's day of mourning for her Founder." Whereas black has always been the customary color associated with mourning, and hence black vestments were always used on Good Friday, red in the customary usage of the Church denotes rejoicing. Red is used on Pentecost Sunday and on the feastdays of martyrs. In that martyrdom is considered among the choicest blessings God bestows, the heavenly birthdays of those who earn the palm of martyrdom are special occasions of joy. Never is red associated with mourning, fasting, and penance. Thus at the commencement of a season of joy, feasting and merry-making -- that is, on the days immediately following Christmas -- the Church celebrates the feastdays of the following martyrs: St. Stephen (the 26th), the Holy Innocents (the 28th), St. Thomas Becket (the 29th). Considering the connection between the liturgical use of red and the spirit of rejoicing, the Robber Church's decision to use red vestments on Good Friday would indeed seem to hearken back to a certain "primitive practice." Those depraved heretics, the utterly perverse Albigenes, had the custom of holding banquets on Good Friday.

"Simplicity of Rites"

"The rites should be distinguished by a noble simplicity; they should be short, clear and unencumbered by useless repetitions; they should be within the people's powers of comprehension, and normally should not require much explanation" (Vatican II's Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy). "For this purpose the rites are to be simplified, while due care is taken to preserve their substance. Elements which, with the passage of time, came to be duplicated, or were added with but little advantage, are now to be discarded. Where opportunity allows or necessity demands, other elements which have suffered injury through accidents of history are now to be restored to the earlier norm of the holy Fathers" (Vatican II, ibid.) "In order that the liturgical service may exhibit a noble simplicity in harmony with the mentality of our times ..." (Instruction on the Liturgy, issued by the Sacred Congregation of Rites, Oct. 16, 1964).

The lack of originality of the Robber Church is remarkable! This plea for "simplicity" is the same identical old ruse used by the Jansenists at Pistoia, when they attempted to get rid of Latin in the liturgy and "vernacularize" everything. One proposition of this Synod of Pistoia demanded "recalling it (the liturgy) to a greater simplicity of rites, by expressing it in the vernacular language, by uttering it in a loud voice." In his constitution Auctorem Fidei (Aug. 28, 1794), Pope Pius VI condemned this very proposition as "rash, offensive to pious

ears, insulting to the Church, favorable to the charges of heretics against it" (sec. 6). Regarding this particular Jansenist proposition, the same Auctorem Fidei says: "As if the present order of the liturgy, received and approved by the Church, had emanated in some part from the forgetfulness of the principles by which it should be regulated ..." !! (sec. 6). To Vatican II, in like manner, we should say: "As if the sacred liturgy, received and approved by the Church, is unclear and encumbered by useless repetitions; as if it is not within the people's power of comprehension; as if it contained elements that had but little advantage! -- Anathema sit!"

"The proposition (of the Synod of Pistoia)," says the same Auctorem Fidei of Pius VI, "asserting that 'it would be against apostolic practice and the plans of God, unless easier ways were prepared for the people to unite their voice with that of the whole Church'; if this be understood to signify the introduction of the use of the vernacular language into the liturgical prayers, it is condemned as false, rash, disturbing to the order prescribed for the celebration of the mysteries, easily productive of many evils" (sec. 24).

Undoubtedly the reader is by now beginning to understand what I meant when I said earlier that the new Robber Church has a penchant, a studied effort, for (1) introducing precisely the same subversive practices already condemned, and (2) offering exactly the same platitudes, arguments and phony pretexts for innovations that the Holy Church has already exposed as mere artifices and devices which heretics are wont to employ.

This clarion call for so-called "simplicity" is contradicted in the very practices of the Robber Church. The priest (that is to say, the "minister" or "presider") now needs half a dozen books, inserts, lectionaries, pamphlets, etc. to perform his celebration. Whereas there was at one time -- from time immemorial, that is -- one Canon of the Mass, now there are four so-called "Eucharistic prayers." A recent Vatican "Guidelines for Liturgical Renewal" boasts of "34 mass formularies." The Mass used to consist of two parts, in a broad sense, namely, the Mass of the Catechumens and the Mass of the Faithful; the new liturgy is divided into what is termed "four parts." Now there are three kinds of masses: (1) with a congregation, (2) celebrated, and (3) without a congregation. (There are also other kinds: those with guitars and bongos, those with dancing nuns, etc.) In keeping with the Vatican II prescription: "and normally should not require much explanation," the "General Instructions" for using the new missal take up a full 58-page book! All very simple.

--P.H.O.

(To be continued)

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